

# CULTURAL RESOURCES

## Purpose

This chapter seeks to identify and protect areas, sites, and buildings having architectural, historical, or cultural significance. It reaffirms that these important places contribute to the vitality and diversity of the county and help to maintain a sense of place.

## Introduction

San Luis Obispo County is fortunate to possess a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Throughout the county, there are archaeological and sacred sites, paleontological sites, historic structures, streetscapes and landscapes, which together tell the unique and ever-evolving story of this diverse county. These cultural resources are a valuable, yet fragile asset that contributes to the uniqueness of San Luis Obispo County.

The County sees the value in preserving its cultural resources as it grows. Maintaining the diversity of people, places, and events that are part of the history of the county contributes to today's vibrant community, enhances the county's quality of life, and attracts new residents and businesses. Embracing the past also enables the county to retain its sense of place.

We can preserve historic sites and buildings by promoting curation, conservation, interpretation, preservation, and consistent standards and guidelines. This will also encourage people to help preserve these resources.

## **Cultural Resources**

*encompass archaeological, traditional, and built environment resources, including but not necessarily limited to buildings, structures, objects, districts, and sites. Cultural resources include sites of important events, traditional cultural places and sacred sites, and places associated with an important person.*

*(Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference, Environmental Handbook, Volume I, Chapter 28: Cultural Resources)*

*Sites of important events, traditional cultural places, and sacred sites, or places associated with an important person may lack obvious physical characteristics.*



## Setting

San Luis Obispo County has a wealth of historic and prehistoric resources, including sites and buildings associated with Native Americans, Spanish missionaries, immigrant settlers, and military branches of the United States. Numerous cultural resources with archaeological or historical significance are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. These sites are presented in **Appendix 4, Table A4-1**. There are also 13 California State Landmarks within the county. These landmarks are listed in **Appendix 4, Table A4-2**. A systematic, comprehensive survey of buildings or sites in the county has not been performed.

The cultural resources of this county are an important part of the county's history and heritage. Native American peoples are known to have occupied our county dating back at least 9,000 years. The Chumash, Salinan, and Yokut lived in this area.

An overview of the county's history and its management of cultural resources is provided in **Appendix 4**.

## Relationship to Other Elements, Plans, and Programs

This chapter describes goals and policies that are intended to preserve cultural and historic resources, and identifies specific actions to do so.

Cultural resources in the county are preserved or protected by goals and policies in the Land Use Element, the Local Coastal Program, and the inland and Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinances. Certain historic resources are also addressed in the [Parks and Recreation Element](#).

The County Land Use Element and area plans guide and regulate the identification, registration, protection, and preservation of significant historic resources. The Land Use Element protects cultural resources through use of combining designations (i.e. zoning overlays), specifically the Historic Site (H) designation for areas of unique historical significance. These combining



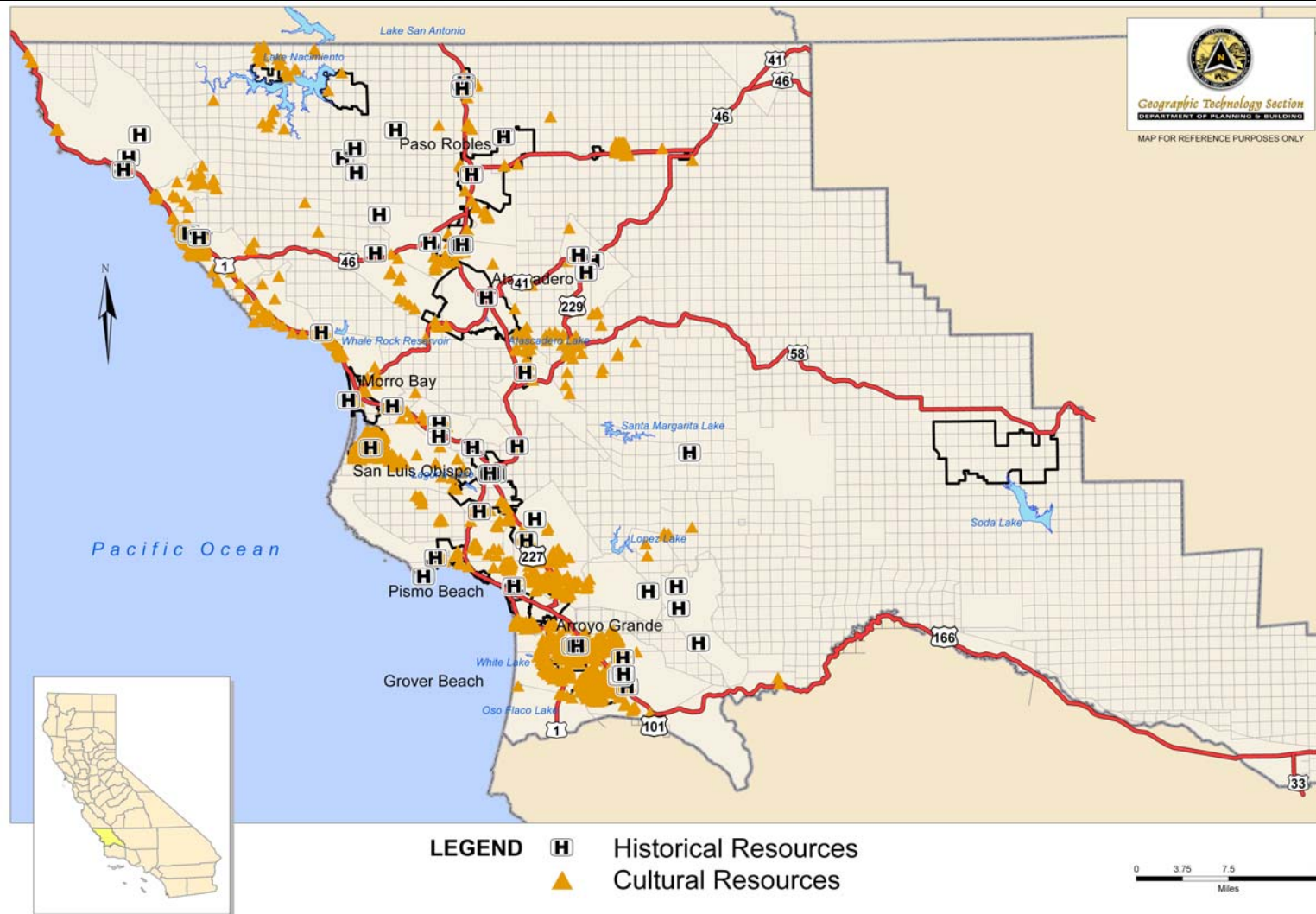
designations are subject to special standards in the inland and Coastal Land Use Ordinances. The Local Coastal Program includes policies and standards to protect archaeological and paleontological resources. **Table CR-1** lists all existing sites with the H combining designation. **Figure CR-1** illustrates the distribution of cultural and historic sites in the county.

**TABLE CR-1**  
**SITES WITH "H" COMBINING DESIGNATIONS**

Adelaida School (1917)	Hansen Barn	Pozo Saloon
Adobe Barn - Los Berros	Hearst Castle	Price Adobe
Arthur Beale House	Hearst Ranch Headquarters	Rancho Huasna (Isaac Sparks Adobe) (1850)
Avila Valley Historic Site	Huasna School (1907)	Rinconada School
Banning School	Independence School	Rios Caledonia Adobe - San Miguel
Bethel Lutheran Church	J. F. MacGillivray Residence (c. 1879)	Rotta Winery (c. 1856?)
Bianchini House	Linne School	Runels Home - Dana Street
C. H. Philips House	Los Berros Schoolhouse	San Marcos Cemetery (c. 1889)
Canet Adobe	Los Osos Schoolhouse	Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Captain James Cass House Complex	Lyman House	Spooner Residence
Cayucos Pier	Marre House (c. 1932)	Tar Springs Ranch
Chandler House-Webster	Geneseo School	Temple of the People - Halcyon
Coffee T. Rice House	Mission San Miguel Archangel	The Paul Squib House
Creston Cemetery	Mission Santa Margarita de Cortona Asistencia	The Sebastian Store
Creston Community Church	Octagon Barn	Tognazzini General Store
Dana Adobe	Old St. Joseph's Church	Van Gordon Archaeological Site
Dana Home	Pacific Coast Railroad Depot Site	Hollister Adobe
Eight-Mile House & Stagecoach Road	Port San Luis Lighthouse (1890)	Willow Creek Cemetery (c. 1911)
Estrella Adobe Church	Porter Ranchhouse (1890)	York Mountain Winery (1882–1890)



FIGURE CR-1  
HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



## Major Issues

Cultural resources throughout the state and county are increasingly under threat due to development pressures, growing use of our open spaces, changes in technology and style, benign neglect, unauthorized collection, and lack of funding for repair and maintenance. The County recognizes that archaeological resources are “living resources,” meaning that the culture represented by these resources still thrives here. Preserving local history and cultural diversity helps the community retain its links to the past and remain a dynamic and desirable place.

## Goals, Policies, and Implementation Strategies

The intent of the following goals, policies, and implementation strategies is to identify and protect cultural and historical resources. These resources contribute to the vitality and diversity of the county and its sense of place.

### ***We will recognize success when...***

- *There is widespread public acceptance of the value of preserving cultural and archaeological sites, because they represent living resources that are part of a continuing culture.*
- *A more effective process is in effect to identify, preserve and prevent demolition or degradation of historic buildings.*

**TABLE CR-2**  
**CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS**

Goal CR 1	The County will have a strong, positive community image that honors our history and cultural diversity.
Goal CR 2	The public will be aware of and support preservation of cultural resources in order to maintain the county's uniqueness and promote economic vitality.
Goal CR 3	The county's historical resources will be preserved and protected.
Goal CR 4	The county's known and potential archaeological and paleontological resources will be preserved and protected.

### **GOAL**

**1**

THE COUNTY WILL HAVE A STRONG, POSITIVE COMMUNITY IMAGE THAT HONORS OUR HISTORY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY.

### *Policy CR 1.1 Cultural Identity*

Establish and support programs that enhance the county's sense of community and identity, such as the collection of oral histories, cultural and genealogical research, and the acquisition of

### ***We will recognize success when...***

- *Sensitive cultural and archaeological resources are identified early in the development review process in consultation with Native Americans, and are avoided whenever feasible.*







*Dana Adobe*

*Photo by the San Luis  
Obispo Land  
Conservancy*

collections of historic artifacts and memorabilia relevant to the history of the county.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 1.1.1 Curation***

Support existing museums or cultural centers and establishment of new ones to educate the public about the importance of local history and archaeology, and to display artifacts, documents, and art relevant to the county's history and cultural diversity. (CR11)

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 1.1.2 Interim Facility***

Work with stakeholders to identify an interim facility to store and exhibit artifacts and documents in a central location.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 1.1.3 Diversified Funding***

Identify and pursue funding for existing and new curation facilities to ensure the continued curation of collections in perpetuity.

**GOAL**

**2**

THE PUBLIC WILL BE AWARE OF AND SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE COUNTY'S UNIQUENESS AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC VITALITY.

***Policy CR 2.1 Community Participation***

The County will actively promote and support community participation in the preservation and enhancement of the county's culture and history.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 2.1.1 Public Outreach***

Establish a program to publicize the County's efforts to protect historical and cultural resources associated with development projects and its commitment to preserve its cultural heritage. The program may include public outreach and education through posters, signs, handouts, brochures, exhibits, videos, the County website, and workshops.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 2.1.2 Outreach to Schools***

Support education programs through local historical societies, schools, and other groups that provide information to the community regarding the rich history of the county and the



importance of preserving it for future generations to appreciate. (CR11)

- ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 2.1.3 Unauthorized Collection**  
Protect sensitive sites from vandalism and unauthorized collection of artifacts by educating staff, public officials, the public, and landowners about the importance of such sites. (CR1d)
- ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 2.1.4 Interpretive Signage**  
Promote the incorporation of monuments, plaques, signs, or artwork into private development projects and County facilities, such as pedestrian and bicycle trails, in order to identify and interpret the county's diverse history.
- ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 2.1.5 Cultural Resources Advisory Committee**  
Establish a Cultural Resources Advisory Committee to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on ways to protect archaeological, historic, and other cultural resources. For example, the Advisory Committee could help identify and evaluate historic sites and buildings to enable their protection. (HR 5 and CR 12 revised)

#### *Policy CR 2.2 Acquisition*

The County encourages and supports acquisition by public agencies or historical or conservation organizations of the most important archaeological and cultural sites from willing sellers. (CR1c)

#### *Policy CR 2.3 "Living Resources"*

Preserve historic sites and buildings and recognize cultural and archaeological resources as "living resources" that are part of a continuing culture.

- ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 2.3.1 Stakeholder Outreach**  
Support and facilitate ongoing discussions or forums about protecting and preserving cultural resources with Native American groups, historical and archaeological interest groups, cultural resource professionals, decision makers, and landowners.



**Consultation** refers to the meaningful and timely process of seeking, discussing, and considering carefully the views of others, in a manner that is cognizant of all parties' cultural values and, where feasible, seeking agreement. Consultation between government agencies and Native American tribes shall be conducted in a way that is mutually respectful of each party's sovereignty. (California Government Code Section 65353.4)

**Government-to-government** means "local agency consultation with a local Native American tribal government."

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 2.3.2 Government-to-Government Consultation**

Establish a government-to-government consultation process with the Native American community and a consultation process with other stakeholders to identify potentially significant cultural resources in the county and to discuss issues relevant to the protection and preservation of cultural resources.

### HISTORICAL RESOURCES

#### GOAL

## 3

THE COUNTY'S HISTORICAL RESOURCES WILL BE PRESERVED AND PROTECTED.

*Policy CR 3.1 Historic Preservation*

The County will continue protecting sites with unique historic or cultural significance. (CR1, CR2a)

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.1.1 Historic Resources Inventory**

Develop and regularly update a comprehensive and systematic historic resources inventory, coordinating with other agencies and organizations as necessary. The inventory should contain sites, historic buildings and structures, and historic documents within the county, and a map depicting their locations. (HR-2)

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.1.2 National Register**

Work with recognized preservation organizations and interested individuals and landowners to determine whether additional churches, schools, and other private and public structures deserve designation and protection as historic resources. Pursue formal listing of all eligible sites and properties in the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources, or as California Historic Landmarks. (CR9)

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.1.3 Historic Listing Process**

Consider ways to protect newly identified historic sites, buildings, and structures in a timely manner as an alternative to including them in the Historic (H) combining designation.





Examples are 1) a Historic Preservation Ordinance that includes or references a list, to be updated periodically, of historic sites, buildings and structures, and 2) planning area/Land Use Ordinance standards that include such lists for each Planning Area.

*Policy CR 3.2 Historic Preservation Programs*

The County supports and encourages historic preservation activities. County agencies should cooperate and coordinate their activities with preservation activities. (HR-7)

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.2.1 Grants**

Support applications for grants and other sources of funding for historic preservation projects that are consistent with the County's General Plan.

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.2.2 Restoration Incentives**

Identify and provide incentives, as feasible, to private landowners, nonprofit organizations, and interested preservation groups to rehabilitate and restore historic buildings and structures and to encourage the productive use of all buildings preserved, preferably through private ownership. (HR-8)

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.2.3 Tax Incentives**

Share information on federal and state tax incentive programs and nonprofit conservation programs for historic preservation with landowners and preservation groups.

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.2.4 Mills Act**

Consider participating in the Mills Act Tax Abatement Program. The Mills Act is an economic incentive program for the restoration and preservation of qualified historic buildings by private owners. Private owners that pledge to rehabilitate and maintain the historical and architectural character of their properties for at least a 10-year period receive substantial property tax savings under the act.



*Lighthouse, Built 1890.*

*Photo by Point San Luis Lighthouse Keepers*





*San Miguel  
Lighthouse Church,  
built 1892.*

*Photo by: Robert  
Vessely P.E*



*Paulding House,  
Arroyo Grande,  
built 1889.*

*Photo by South  
County Historical  
Society*

### *Policy CR 3.3 Remodeling and Reconstruction*

Maintain and enhance the historic character of the county by establishing review procedures for the remodeling and reconstruction of buildings and other structures consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

#### ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.3.1 Historic Preservation Ordinance**

Consider amending historic preservation standards and/or guidelines to 1) more effectively preserve and enhance archaeological sites and historic buildings, 2) prevent demolition or substantial changes in outward appearance of historically designated buildings, unless it is necessary for public health and safety, 3) integrate historically accurate designs and features in historic residential and commercial structures, and 4) restore historic buildings or sites using the greatest degree of authenticity practicable, consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as appropriate. (HR-10)

#### ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.3.2 Restoration Assistance**

Provide property owners and developers with design assistance, including information on the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and structures. Use private and public resources to provide information on proper methods and techniques of restoration and rehabilitation, including sources of funding assistance. (HR-9)

#### ◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 3.3.3 Salvaged Materials**

Encourage the reuse of salvaged architecturally significant materials.



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

## GOAL

4

THE COUNTY'S KNOWN AND POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES WILL BE PRESERVED AND PROTECTED.

*Policy CR 4.1 Non-development Activities*

Discourage or avoid activities, other than development, that could damage or destroy archaeological sites, including off-road vehicle use on or adjacent to known sites. Prohibit unauthorized collection of artifacts. (Also, refer to **Implementation Strategy CR 2.1.3.**)

*Policy CR 4.2 Protection of Native American Cultural Sites*

Ensure protection of archaeological sites that are culturally significant to Native Americans, even if they have lost their scientific or archaeological integrity through previous disturbance. Protect sites that have religious value, even though no artifacts are present. Protect sites that contain artifacts, which may have intrinsic value, even though their archaeological context has been disturbed.

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 4.2.1 Archaeological Sensitivity Mapping**

Identify significant archaeological and cultural sites and conduct sensitivity mapping in consultation with Native Americans and archaeological and conservation organizations to improve the County's ability to protect the resources. Map resources consistently in urban and rural areas of the county. (CR1a)

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 4.2.2 Archaeological Site Records**

Establish and maintain, but do not publicize archaeological site records. Site records may be released to limited individuals and groups with appropriate professional or tribal credentials.

*Policy CR 4.3 Cultural Resources and Open Space*

The County supports the concept of cultural landscapes and the protection and preservation of archaeological or historical resources as open space or parkland on public or private lands. (CR8)

**Archeology** is the scientific study of historic or prehistoric peoples and their cultures by analysis of their artifacts, inscriptions, monuments, and other such remains



A Native American rock painting.

Photo by Jeff Oliveira



***Interpretation of cultural resources***  
can include  
monuments, signs,  
plaques, artwork,  
publications, etc.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 4.3.1 Cultural Landscapes***

The identification and interpretation of cultural resources should consider the larger landscape in order to address the relationships between archaeological sites, landscape features and the environment.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 4.3.2 Cultural Landscapes: Open Space Easements***

In proposed land divisions and discretionary land use permits: 1) locate parcels and easements to optimize protection of cultural resources, 2) as necessary, clearly define allowable uses, prohibited activities, and open space maintenance responsibilities as a condition of approval, and 3) use open space easements to protect designated archaeological sites.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 4.3.3 Cultural Landscapes: Management***

Manage public open space and parkland so that public use does not disturb or degrade archaeological or historical resources.

***Policy CR 4.4 Development Activities and Archaeological Sites***

Protect archaeological and culturally sensitive sites from the effects of development by avoiding disturbance where feasible. Avoid archaeological resources as the primary method of protection. (CR1b)

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 4.4.1 Native American participation in development review process***

Include Native Americans in resource assessment and impact mitigation. Consult with Native American representatives early in the development review process and in the design of appropriate mitigations (CR1b-2). Enable their presence during archaeological excavation and construction in areas likely to contain cultural resources.

◇ ***Implementation Strategy CR 4.4.2 Cultural Resource Studies***

Require cultural resources studies (i.e., archaeological and historical investigations) by a professional who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards when development is proposed within an



archaeologically or historically sensitive area. These studies will conform to the County's approved guidelines. (CR1b-3 CR10)

*Policy CR 4.5 Paleontological Resources*

Protect paleontological resources from the effects of development by avoiding disturbance where feasible.

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 4.5.1 Paleontological Studies**

Require a paleontological resource assessment and mitigation plan to 1) identify the extent and potential significance of the resources that may exist within the proposed development and 2) provide mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts when existing information indicates that a site proposed for development may contain biological, paleontological, or other scientific resources.

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 4.5.2 Paleontological Monitoring**

Require a paleontologist and/or registered geologist to monitor site-grading activities when paleontological resources are known or likely to occur. The monitor will have the authority to halt grading to determine the appropriate protection or mitigation measures. Measures may include collection of paleontological resources, curation of any resources collected with an appropriate repository, and documentation with the County.

*Policy CR 4.6 Resources-Based Sensitivity*

Protect archaeological resources near streams, springs and water sources, rock outcrops, and significant ridgetops, as these are often indicators of the presence of cultural resources.

◇ **Implementation Strategy CR 4.6.1 Resource-Based Surveys**

- a. Require a preliminary site survey to determine the likelihood of resources with all development subject to a discretionary permit that is proposed within 1) 100 feet of the bank of a creek or spring or 2) 300 feet of a creek where the slope of that area is less than 10 percent. Require that a professional archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications for Archaeology conduct the preliminary survey.

**Paleontology** is the science of the forms of life existing in former geologic periods, as represented by their fossils.



Ancient grinding holes in a rock outcropping often resulted from repeated nut grinding by Native American women.

Photo by Jeff Oliveira







*San Simeon School House*  
Photo by Jeff Legato

Recommendations made by the archaeologist may be applied as mitigation measures.

- b. As significant rock outcrops and ridge tops are identified, determine the distances within which or the circumstances under which proposed discretionary development would be subject to a preliminary site survey, based on site-specific conditions.

### Summary of Implementation Strategies

For each implementation strategy described in this chapter, the following table (**Table CR-3**) summarizes the County department or other agency that has primary responsibility for carrying out that strategy. In addition, the table summarizes the priority, estimated year of initiation, and potential source of funding of each strategy. The actual timeframe for implementing the strategies is dependent upon the availability of adequate staff and funding.

**TABLE CR-3**  
**CULTURAL RESOURCES IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation Strategy	Responsible Department or Agency <sup>1</sup>	Priority	Timeframe to Start	Potential Funding Sources <sup>2</sup>
CR 1.1.1 Curation	Private/Public	Medium	2012	Private/Grants
CR 1.1.2 Interim Facility	Private/Public	Medium	2011	Private
CR 1.1.3 Diversified Funding	Private/Public	Medium	2011	Private
CR 2.1.1 Public	PB, Hist. Soc.	Medium	2011	DB, Grants
CR 2.1.2 Outreach to Schools	PB, Hist. Soc., Cal Poly	Medium	2011	DB
CR 2.1.3 Unauthorized Collection	GS, PB	Medium	2011	DB/Grants
CR 2.1.4 Interpretive Signage	GS, PB, PW	Medium	2011	Private/DB
CR 2.1.5 Cultural Resources Advisory Committee	PB	Medium	2012	DB
CR 2.3.1 Stakeholder Outreach	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A



Implementation Strategy	Responsible Department or Agency <sup>1</sup>	Priority	Timeframe to Start	Potential Funding Sources <sup>2</sup>
CR 2.3.2 Govt-to-Gove Consultation	PB, Other agencies	Medium	Immediately	DB
CR 3.1.1 Historic Resources Inventory	PB	Medium	2011	DB
CR 3.1.2 National Register	PB	Medium	2011	DB
CR 3.1.3 Historic Listing Process	PB	Medium	2011	DB
CR 3.2.1 Grants	PB, GS	Medium	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 3.2.2 Restoration Incentives	PB	Medium	2011	N/A
CR 3.2.3 Tax incentives	PB	Medium	Immediately	N/A
CR 3.2.4 Mills Act	PB	Medium	2011	N/A
CR 3.3.1 Historic Preservation Ordinance	PB	Medium	2011	N/A
CR 3.3.2 Assistance	PB	Medium	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 3.3.3 Salvaged Materials	PB	Medium	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.2.1 Arch Sens. Mapping	PB	Medium	2011	N/A
CR 4.2.2 Arch Site Records	PB	Medium	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.3.1 Cultural Landscapes	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.3.2 Cultural Landscapes: Open Space Easements	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.3.3 Cultural Landscapes: Management	GS, other agencies	Medium	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	DB
CR 4.4.1 Native American Participation	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.4.2 Arch Sensitive Areas	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.5.1 Paleontological Studies	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.5.2 Paleontological Monitoring	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A
CR 4.6.1 Creeks and other Archaeological Resources	PB	High	Immediately <sup>3</sup>	N/A

## Notes:

## 1 Department abbreviations:

Cities = Incorporated cities

GS = County General Services Agency

PB = County Department of Planning and Building

PW = County Department of Public Works

## 2 Funding source abbreviations:

GF = General Fund

DB = Planning and Building Department Budget

## 3 Denotes an ongoing activity.

Source: Department of Planning and Building, March 2009.

